

See how easy it is to hit the ground running with this free unit from **Short, Short, BIG**

This is Grab-and-Go Teaching! *(We know you're busy.)*

Short, Short, BIG

Short Reads.

Short Writes.

BIG Gains!

In this unit, your students will learn how to:

- Distinguish the key difference between a claim and a statement
- Comprehend the important distinction between facts and opinions
- Use an SQ3R strategy to do a close reading of a short, non-fiction text
- Learn from model text how to transfer their reading comprehension skills to strong evidence-based writing
- Take the first step towards gaining the academic confidence they need that will have them believing they can become competent, strong readers and writers (for the rest of their life!)

What you get:

This unit includes 4 ready-to-teach classroom lessons. The step-by-step lesson plans we provide you each have their own academic objective.

Educator's Note:

Being able to compose a strong, well-written, grammatically correct claim is the foundation for all evidence-based writing. We want to make sure your students get this right.

Lesson 1

Academic Objective:

To assess how well students are able to make one single, rock-solid claim without yet requiring evidence to support their assertion.

Lesson 2

Academic Objective:

To make sure students understand:
1. What a claim actually is
2. That the nature of a claim is that it is debatable.
3. How claims differ from statements

Lesson 3

Academic Objective:

To make sure students understand the significant difference between claims and statements so that once they start composing complete **short writes**, they will know how to start their compositions off on the proper foot.

Lesson 4

Academic Objective:

To reinforce the difference between a claim and a statement. Students will examine a slightly longer text and identify those points that are undisputed facts, and those points that are the author's claims or opinions.

With **Short, Short, BIG** you can shift the focus from loss to growth and discover how easy it is to effectively teach evidence-based reading and writing.

Short, Short,

BIG 

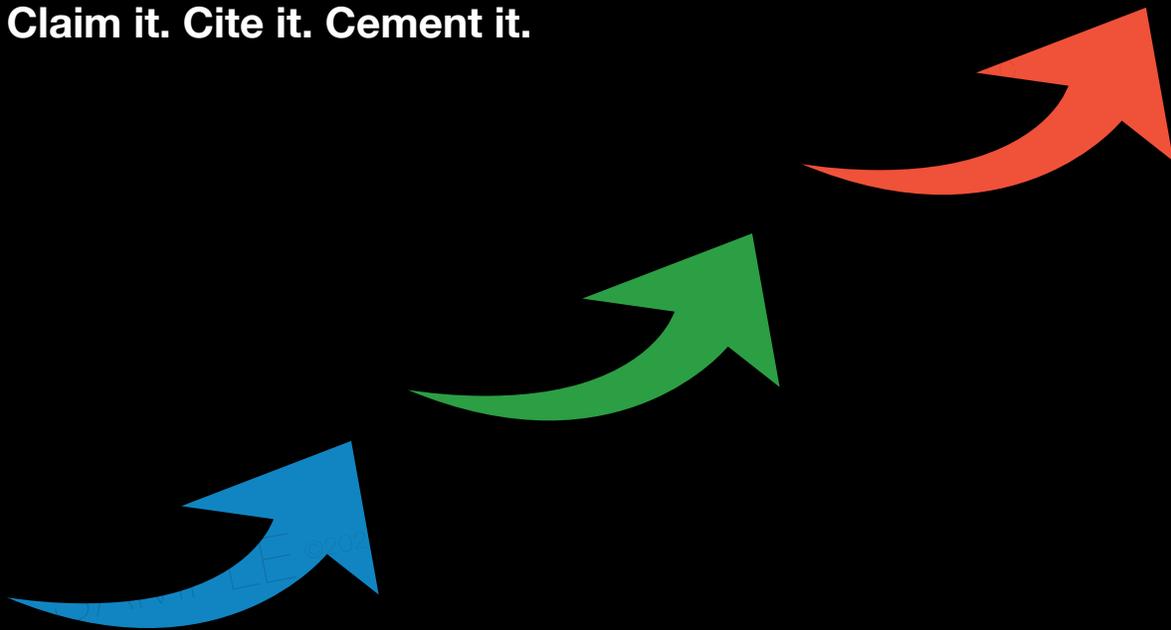
Short Reads.

Short Writes.

BIG Gains!

Teacher's Guide

Claim it. Cite it. Cement it.



Dr. Katie McKnight & Alan Sitomer

Welcome to Short, Short, BIG

What you now hold in your hand is a program which has been more than 15 years in the making. (Hey, we're slow typists.) Of course, being that the entire premise of Short, Short, BIG! (SSB) celebrates the power, intelligence and elegance found in being concise, we'll get straight to the point: this stuff works!

Short, Short, BIG! was written for teachers, by teachers, to provide today's classroom educators a pragmatic, proven tool that will elevate their students' evidence-based writing and reading skills. Simple to implement, with step-by-step lessons that build competency one well-considered skill at a time, our program meets learners where they are and gives them the tools to get their ELA skills to where we want them to be.

In addition to working with K-12 teachers across the nation, both of us have had the good fortune to work with students at almost every level in the world of K-12 education. Thus, we can promise you a few things about the materials you now hold in your hands.

- 1. It's been tested.** We've used these instructional materials in some shape or form ourselves with scores of real students in real classrooms. (That's code for us having taught gobs of burping boys and giggly girls.) And we've attained great success in elevating student performance across the board with this approach to evidence-based writing and reading instruction. You will, too.
- 2. It's user friendly.** We've built SSB with a keen eye towards making everything user friendly. That means user friendly for you, the teacher at the front of the room, as well as user friendly for the student sitting at his or her desk, who is doing the hard work of developing into a strong and capable writer and reader. Simple, purposeful, powerful instruction wins; bloated, over-instructed, convoluted teaching materials are out. This is a "less is definitely more" approach.
- 3. It's engaging.** Smiles and fun are baked into the DNA of Short, Short, BIG!. The source text is interesting, and the question prompts are lively, dynamic, and often even humorous. The purposeful pedagogical strategy intentionally lets students enjoy the process of learning how to become strong writers and readers. Fun, joy, and relevance are not mutually exclusive to rigor, exactitude, and excellence. In fact, we find them to be highly interdependent. This material is a marriage of the best of both worlds. Yes, you can have your academic cake and eat it, too.

We're confident you can attain significant, measurable achievement with evidence-based short response writing and reading in your classroom because SSB taps the power of:

- Research-based color-coding pedagogy
- Special insights for working with low-performing students
- Formative/summative on-demand assessments that provide valuable, actionable, immediately useful feedback
- A Growth Mindset methodology applied to the Gradual Release of Responsibility framework
- Reading strategies that support comprehension of accessible texts

And if that isn't enough, much of the source text comes from Saddleback Educational Publishing. That means you're being outfitted with some of the best from the world of publishing for young people.

Good luck with your journey ahead. It's a new day for student achievement.

How to Use the Short, Short, BIG Teacher Guide:

Created by teachers for teachers, Short, Short, BIG! contains everything that you need to develop your students' writing skills.

We are often asked, "What is the specific pacing plan you recommend?"

As an everyday core curriculum, SSB is about an 8–10-week journey depending on your students' prior skill sets. However, it can be used as a supplemental tool that stretches over the length of a semester. In "short" it can be adapted to meet a variety of instructional contexts.

Now, let's look at the components for each individual lesson:



Lesson Objectives – Learning Targets are included with each lesson and can be aligned to local standards.

Engage – We offer clearly articulated suggestions for introducing content and drawing students into the lessons.



Tips from the Classroom – Just like when you ask for advice from your colleagues, we provide insights, hints, and suggestions from our first-hand experiences.

Modeling – We learn from watching others and learning to write is no exception. Students need to see teachers behaving as writers and readers. That's why read-alouds, think-alouds, and write-alouds are prominently featured throughout the lessons.

Review and Share – Based on extensive classroom experience, we recognize that learning increases when students discuss their reading and writing. Therefore, you will see a Review and Share step in almost every lesson.

>> **Next Steps** – At the conclusion of each lesson, SSB provides information to clarify the scaffolding of writing instruction. You'll always know what's coming up.

Lesson scripts appear throughout the program. Of course, you're not expected to follow these scripts word for word! Teachers know their students best. These lesson scripts are intended to be models for implementation. Think of them as suggestions and use these opportunities to develop your own teacher-student relationships.

COLOR! – Throughout the program you'll utilize **blue**, **green**, and **orange** in various ways. When relevant, these colors will also appear in different fonts and line styles to help convey the differentiation for any color blind users.

Essentially, we've provided great teaching, delightful reads, and the scope and sequence; you can provide the timing and implementation according to your own schedule/needs/wants. Our vision and intent for SSB is to take the ambiguity out of the teaching of writing and providing a "grab and go" resource.

Of course, Short, Short, BIG! does offer some of the best professional development workshops to be found in the world of ELA (live or virtual) so if you are interested in those, simply visit our website at www.shortshortbig.com.

Katie McKnight & Alan Sitomer

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Concept to LEARN

WHAT IS A CLAIM?

CLAIM IT! —————> Says what you know

A claim is when someone says, “this is true”—it’s when a person puts forth an idea that something is an actual fact.

Claims vs. Statements

But hold on, because a claim is NOT a statement of fact; a claim is when someone says that something is a fact—and there is a HUGE difference between the two.

THIS IS A CLAIM	This is NOT a claim
Pepperoni pizza is delicious.	Pepperoni pizza is a type of food.
The author of the story probably spent a lot of time around young kids.	The author wrote a story about young kids.
Checkers is a fun and easy board game.	Checkers is a board game.

Claims put forth a statement that can be argued and debated!

- Saying, “Football is better than baseball,” is a claim.
- Saying, “Football is a sport,” is NOT a claim. (It’s a simple statement that can’t be debated.)

THIS IS A CLAIM	This is NOT a claim
Sneakers are more comfortable than boots.	Sneakers are worn by people on their feet.
The waitress cares about her customers.	The waitress serves her customers food.
Motorcycles were a terrible invention.	Motorcycles are a form of transportation.

Remember, not every statement is a claim.

Introducing Claims



ESTIMATED TIME:

10-15 minutes

OBJECTIVE:

To make sure students understand:

1. What a claim actually is.
2. That the nature of a claim is that it is debatable.
3. How claims differ from statements.

1 Engage: Explain to students how we live in a world of claims. From teachers (“*Vegetable is an important word to know how to spell.*”) to students (“*Vegetables are not nearly as tasty as cookies.*”) to parents (“*Eating vegetables is good for you.*”) Few if any of us make it through a full day without being exposed to claim after claim after claim. We make them in our own personal lives all the time.

2 Model: Exemplify for students how making claims is something they are already doing every day.

- “That new song is incredible!”
- “My mom’s car needs a wash.”
- “My neighbor’s new puppy is so, so cute.”



BRING YOUR CLASSROOM TO LIFE!

Look around your room and make a (spontaneous) claim in order to show how claims are everywhere in our lives:

- *That file cabinet would look better if pretty yellow flowers were painted on it.*
- *The whiteboard at the front of the room needs to be bigger.*
- *The school should install a water fountain in every classroom.*

3 Read: Do a whole class reading of **What is a Claim?** on **page 9** of the Student Worktext.

4 Review and discuss: Interrupt and interject during the whole class reading to check for comprehension. For example, you might ask:

If I say, “A chair is a piece of furniture on which people sit,” is that a claim or a statement?

If I say, “The chairs in this classroom are comfortable pieces of furniture,” is that a claim or a statement?

Ask students to make a few claims about objects inside your room.

5 What to look for: Informally assess if students can (1) make a claim and (2) distinguish between a claim and a statement.

>> Next steps: Anchor student learning by having them practice identifying claims.

Activity to DO



IDENTIFYING CLAIMS

Determine whether each sentence below is a claim or a statement.

1. Vegetarians don't eat meat.
Claim Statement
2. Movies are more entertaining than YouTube videos.
Claim Statement
3. Beach vacations are more fun for kids than mountain vacations.
Claim Statement
4. The school principal is in charge of the campus.
Claim Statement
5. Nike makes comfortable running shoes.
Claim Statement
6. Dogs are better pets than cats.
Claim Statement
7. Dogs and cats are both pets.
Claim Statement
8. Spending too much time on a computer can make you tired.
Claim Statement
9. Cereal is the best breakfast to eat if you want to start your day right.
Claim Statement
10. Goldfish live in water.
Claim Statement

Identifying Claims (and Differentiating them from Statements)



ESTIMATED TIME:

5-10 minutes**OBJECTIVE:**

To make sure students understand the significant difference between claims and statements so that once they start composing complete short writes, they will know how to start their compositions off on the proper foot.

1 Engage: Have students open their worktexts to **page 10** and let them know that based on the prior class discussion, you have a lot of confidence in their ability to do well.

2 Model: Do the first question as a think-aloud for the whole class.

Step 1: Read the question aloud.

Vegetarians don't eat meat.

Step 2: Be explicit about your thought process.

For example, say: *Since I am not really being given an opinion on something and the idea is not debatable because there is no such thing as a vegetarian who does eat meat, this is a statement of fact. Thus, I have my answer.*

3 Read and write: Have students answer the rest of the questions.

4 Review and share: Go over answers as a class.

5 What to look for: This is an important concept so make sure your students understand the distinction between claims and statements. We're about to scaffold upward. Before you know it, our young writers will compose rock-solid claims of their own.

**Watch out for sneaky questions:**

Some students mistake claims for statements because the expressed opinions are almost universally accepted. That doesn't mean they are facts. For example:

Question 5: Many people find Nikes comfortable but some people do not. Thus, it's a claim and not a statement.

Question 8: Many people believe that spending too much time on a computer can make you tired but some people believe that spending too much time on a computer can make you extra excitable and sleepless. Thus, it's a claim and not a statement.

>> Next steps: This is an opportunity to use praise to build confidence. When you instill the belief that students can be successful, they start to believe it. They need to believe it before they can achieve it.



Activity to DO

TIPS

Is it a statement or a claim? Here are some tips!

CLAIMS	This is NOT a claim
A CLAIM is a sentence that states an OPINION.	A STATEMENT is a sentence that states a FACT.
People disagree with CLAIMS all the time.	A STATEMENT can be proven true.
<p>Tip: If the sentence includes these phrases, it's probably a CLAIM:</p> <p><i>I believe...</i> <i>I think...</i> <i>In my opinion...</i> <i>Someone should...</i> <i>The best thing...</i> <i>The worst thing...</i> <i>I prefer...</i> <i>...is better than...</i></p>	<p>You can't argue about a STATEMENT.</p> <p>(Well, you can but the argument would be about debating whether the facts were actually correct and accurate.)</p>

Write or illustrate a personal tip to help you remember the difference between a CLAIM and a STATEMENT.

Fact or Opinion, Statement or Claim?

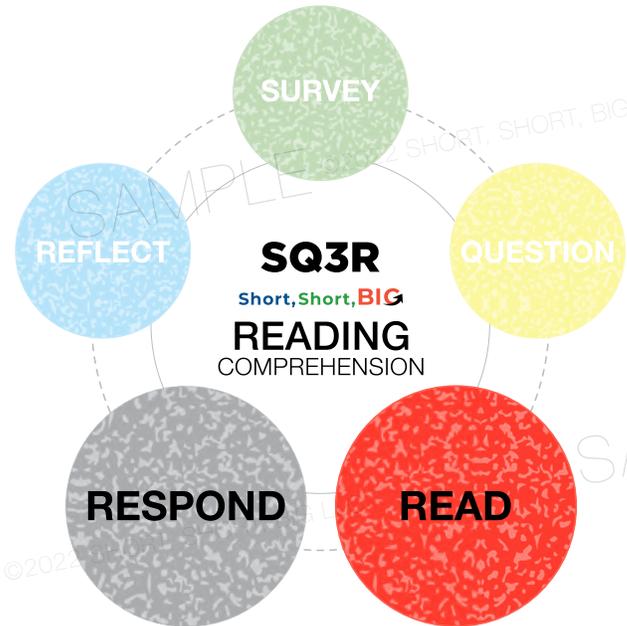
READING COMPREHENSION LESSON



ESTIMATED TIME:

15-20 minutes

Discerning the difference between a statement and a claim requires students to closely examine subtleties and inferences. Using a two-column graphic organizer helps students visually sort facts from opinions as they make their way through a text.



OBJECTIVE:

To reinforce the difference between a claim and a statement, students will examine a slightly longer text and identify those points that are undisputed facts, and those points that are the author's claims or opinions.

WHAT THE RESEARCH SAYS

Evidence based writing is at the heart of critical thinking. When students have an understanding of the components of an argument and are able to closely examine texts and identify evidence, they are engaging in that deep critical thinking.

Hillocks, G. (2010). "EJ" in Focus: Teaching Argument for Critical Thinking and Writing: An Introduction. *The English Journal*, 99(6), 24-32. Hillocks, G. (2011). *Teaching argument writing, grades 6-12*. Portsmouth, NH: Heineman.

- Engage:** Let students know that, based on the **Identifying Claims** activities, you believe they are ready to apply their skill to an actual text.

2 Model: Display the following text about motorcycles. Read the text aloud. Then demonstrate how you “extract” sentences from the text and sort them into the correct categories. Use a blank 2-column graphic organizer, similar to the one on **page 13** in the Student Worktext.

If you want to live, never drive a motorcycle. In the event of a crash, a motorcycle offers far less protection than a car. Over 89% of high-speed motorcycle accidents end in death when only 54% of high-speed automobile accidents end in death. Also, car drivers hate motorcycles. Sometimes I think they don't even care if they crash.

Statements & Facts:

Claims & Opinions

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the event of a crash, a motorcycle offers far less protection than a car. • Over 89% of high speed motorcycle accidents end in death when only 54% of high speed automobile accidents end in death. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you want to live, never drive a motorcycle. • Also, car drivers hate motorcycles. • Sometimes I think they don't even care if they crash. |
|---|--|

3 Read and Respond: Proceed to the activity on **page 13** of the Student Worktext. Instruct students to read the text, then complete the **Statements or Claims Graphic Organizer**.



Consider providing sentence strips of **GRIZZLIES: THE COOLEST BEARS**.

What is a sentence strip? It's when each sentence of a text is provided on a separate strip of paper for easy manipulation. To create strips, write or type out each sentence from the text on a separate line. Give a photocopy of this sheet to each student. They can cut the strips themselves.

Using sentence strips encourages students to re-think their decisions. Sometimes students are reluctant to change an answer because they already invested time in writing it down.

>> Next steps: It's time for students to start making their own claims. When this graphic organizer activity is complete, move on to the **Make 5 Claims** activity.

Something to READ



GRIZZLIES: THE COOLEST BEARS

In my opinion, grizzly bears are the coolest animal. They are large. An adult male can weigh 1,000 pounds. Their front claws can be over 4-inches long. Their color ranges from light brown to dark brown. Many have white tips on their fur. This “grizzled” look gives them their name.

The grizzly bear leads a solitary life. Except for mothers and their cubs, they usually live by themselves. This is probably very lonely for the bear.

We should all work to make sure grizzly bears can live safely with humans. They used to live all over the western United States. Then hunters killed a lot of them. Now they are protected under the Endangered Species Act.





Activity to DO

STATEMENTS OR CLAIMS GRAPHIC ORGANIZER

Read the article **GRIZZLIES: THE COOLEST BEARS**.

- Copy 2 statement sentences into the Statements column.
- Copy 2 claim sentences into the Claims column.

STATEMENTS

Identify 2 Statement sentences from the Grizzlies article.

1. _____

2. _____

CLAIMS

Identify 2 Claim sentences from the Grizzlies article.

1. _____

2. _____

Make 5 Claims



ESTIMATED TIME:

10-15 minutes

OBJECTIVE:

Students write 5 claims in a silent classroom. These claims will serve as source material for re-writing claims in an upcoming lesson.

1 Engage: Have students open their mouths wide. Then wider. Then as wide as they can possibly stretch their lips.

And then have them close their mouths. When their mouths are closed, explain to students how we are now going to introduce a new tool into the Short, Short, BIG! writing process called **7 Minutes of Silence**.

Not 250 minutes of silence.

But not a mere 2 minutes either.

7 full minutes of respectful quiet.

2 Model quiet space: Take out your cell phone and turn it off. Explain how when you are grading papers or writing an email to a parent or doing any sort of important writing activity, you know you need a quiet environment in which you can think. Show them how in a world filled with so much “noise” we have to take steps to protect our space to think, teacher and student alike.



TIP FROM THE CLASSROOM:

Cultivate the 7 minutes of writing silence NOW. Part of the methodology in building capable young writers is building a classroom culture and environment that enables young writers to succeed. And a noisy class with chronic interruptions makes doing the thinking necessary to compose high-quality work very challenging. Win this war now – be firm and be resolute – and it will pay off in spades later. The silence to think and write will grow in import as the demands of the lessons evolve.

WHAT THE RESEARCH SAYS

Students need the time and space, with no distractions, to be able to think and process. It's this quiet time that also provides student writers with the opportunity to think and reflect as they engage in critical thinking and creation.

Fletcher, R., & Portalupi, J. (2001). *Writing workshop: The essential guide*. Heinemann

Activity to DO



MAKE 5 CLAIMS

Question 1: How much television should students in your class be allowed to watch each day?

Question 2: What is the ugliest animal in nature?

Question 3: How much candy should you be allowed to eat each day?

Question 4: How many baths or showers should you have to take each week?

Question 5: Should parents ever serve their children ice cream for breakfast?

- **3 Read and write:** Have students do the **Make 5 Claims** activity on **page 14** of the Student Worktext. Yes, the questions are fun – and funny – but when the classroom is filled with students who are laughing and talking and so on, it's very hard for people to focus.

**CIRCULATE AND CHECK!**

Walk around the room to be a protector of the silence.

Actively build a culture of quiet writing time in your classroom now. No, it may not happen right away but remain dogged about creating a writing environment conducive to success. The seeds you plant now will blossom into important flowers later on.

- 4 Review and share:** Allow the steam kettle of classroom silence to release its energy. Have students share their responses. Remember: Your guiding question throughout will be, “Please read to me exactly what you have written on your paper.” No ad-libbing. If it's not on the page, prevent it from coming to the stage.

- 5 What to look for:** You want to gauge (1) students' ability to make a claim (2) students' ability to write in silence for 7 minutes and (3) students' ability to “read what they have written exactly as it sits on the page” without additional commentary.

>> Next steps: Reflect on your class's ability to work in silence. Is it where you need it to be? Is there a particularly challenging student or two? Do you need some behavior management suggestions from a colleague? As we prepare to amplify the rigor of the instruction, make sure you have created the classroom environment necessary for young writers to succeed.

And if you haven't, don't feel ashamed. But don't give up, either. Keep working at it. Without strong classroom management, it's exceptionally challenging to be an effective teacher.

P-Q-A: Putting the Question in the Answer



ESTIMATED TIME:
10-15 minutes



OBJECTIVE:

Teach students how to compose a rock solid claim that directly answers the question they have been asked by using the root of the question as the sentence stem of the answer.

- 1 Engage:** Ask students if they have ever learned a “trick of the trade”? Have they ever discovered a “secret to success”? Maybe while playing video games, they learned a move that always worked. Maybe when filling a jar, they learned to put the big items in before the small ones so that more things would fit.

Much like journalists are taught, “Don’t bury the lead,” learning to P-Q-A is a tool that empowers young writers to achieve consistent success. Be explicit about its value. This is a proven methodology that will deliver significant and sustainable gains.

NOTE: *Once students begin writing in the content areas - science, math, history and so on – this strategy will avail itself to be particularly excellent.*

- 2 Read:** Do a whole class reading of **P-Q-A: Putting the Question in the Answer** on page 15.

- 3 Discuss and Model:** Check for comprehension during the whole class reading.

For example, you can interject with a think-aloud:

If the question asks me, “What is my favorite movie of all time?” an incorrectly stated answer would be, “The Lion King.”

A correctly stated answer would be, “My favorite movie of all time is The Lion King,” because in the second sentence I put the root of the question in the stem of the answer.


Concept to LEARN

Put the Question in the Answer

P-Q-A stands for “Put the Question in the Answer.” It’s a surefire way of making sure your claim can be clearly understood without a reader having to know what question you’re answering.

Why is P-Q-A so important? Well, imagine you read this:

Chocolate sauce, whipped cream, and sprinkles.

As a reader, you would have no idea what the writer was talking about.

However, if you read this, you would understand:

Three popular toppings that kids like to put on ice cream are chocolate sauce, whipped cream and sprinkles.

Makes sense, right? Take a look at the 3 examples below:



Question:

What are three popular toppings kids like to put on ice cream?

Incorrectly stated claim: *Chocolate sauce, whipped cream and sprinkles.*

Correctly stated claim: *Three popular toppings that kids like to put on ice cream are chocolate sauce, whipped cream and sprinkles.*

Question:

What is your favorite color?

Incorrectly stated claim: *Blue.*

Correctly stated claim: *My favorite color is blue.*

Question:

What is your least favorite vegetable to eat?

Incorrectly stated claim: *Broccoli.*

Correctly stated claim: *My least favorite vegetable to eat is broccoli.*

Using P-Q-A is a must for success. And using the words from the question in your answer is not cheating; it’s what strong writers do! Why? The two most important reasons are because:

1. By restating the question in the answer, a writer provides context for the reader. (And this is VERY important.)
2. It helps limit your claim to only one strong sentence. And that’s what we want right now (one strong sentence).

**TIP FROM THE CLASSROOM:**

Using P-Q-A is one of the best ways to eliminate a chronic challenge that often bedevils student writers: not answering the question they have been asked. Time and again one of the great missteps students make when it comes to composing written responses to on-demand prompts is that they answer a question they assume they've been asked instead of answering the question that was actually asked. By using P-Q-A, which requires that students incorporate the actual words from the question prompt into core of their claim, students avoid a common pitfall that far too frequently – and unnecessarily – hurts their performance.

4 What to look for: This is a lesson that might take a few go-rounds to stick. Be patient and don't expect that all of your students to be able to consistently employ the strategy right away. The goal is simply to make sure your students understand the logic underneath P-Q-A. Deliberate practice will anchor the learning.

WHAT THE RESEARCH SAYS

Practice is critical. In the Gradual Release of Responsibility (GRR) framework, the idea is for students to have ample practice time in order to develop skills and content knowledge. This is especially important in light of Richard Allington's research about schools that are able to close the student achievement gap in literacy.

Allington, R., & Gabriel, R. (2012). Every child, every day. *Educational Leadership*, 69(6), 10- 15.

>> Next steps: More practice with P-Q-A is forthcoming. Experience has proven that after students spend a few lessons being consistently steered towards incorporating P-Q-A in their short responses, the strategy will “click” and the quality of their claims will dramatically improve.

Re-Write 5 Claims Using P-Q-A



ESTIMATED TIME:

10-15 minutes**OBJECTIVE:**

Students will rewrite the same 5 claims they wrote on page 14 in their worktexts, making sure to incorporate the P-Q-A methodology.

- 1 Engage:** Ask students if they have ever wanted a “do over.” Maybe they were playing kickball, a question came up as to whether the ball was in or out of bounds and finally someone cried out, “Do over!” Maybe they asked their parents for something in an abrupt and coarse voice without saying the word please and, after their mom glared, they asked their mom the exact same question a second time but in a much nicer and polite fashion.

The point is that many things can be improved with a second attempt. In writing, this is particularly true. Tap your students’ prior knowledge by asking them if this has ever been the case in their own lives.

- 2 Model:** Do a write aloud of the first question, showing students how to implement the P-Q-A strategy into their claims.

Question 1: How much television should a 4th grade student be allowed to watch each day?

Answer you may have seen: 30 minutes per day.

P-Q-A answer you want to see: A fourth grade student should be allowed to watch 30 minutes of television per day.

**CONVENTIONS OPPORTUNITY: SENTENCE FRAGMENT**

The “answer you may have seen” [above] presents an opportunity to explain what a sentence fragment is and show how the P-Q-A strategy can help eliminate them.

Sentence Fragment Definition: *Sentence fragments are groups of words that look like sentences, but aren't. To be a sentence, groups of words need to have at least one independent clause. An independent clause is any group of words that contain both a subject and a verb and can stand on its own.*

Activity to DO



RE-WRITE YOUR 5 CLAIMS

Question 1: How much television should students in your class be allowed to watch each day?

Check your work. Did you use P-Q-A? Did you write one complete sentence?

Question 2: What is the ugliest animal in nature?

Check your work. Did you use P-Q-A? Did you write one complete sentence?

Question 3: How much candy should you be allowed to eat each day?

Check your work. Did you use P-Q-A? Did you write one complete sentence?

Question 4: How many baths or showers should you have to take each week?

Check your work. Did you use P-Q-A? Did you write one complete sentence?

Question 5: Should parents ever serve their children ice cream for breakfast?

Check your work. Did you use P-Q-A? Did you write one complete sentence?

3 Read and write: Have students open their worktexts to **page 16**, and re-write their answers to question 2-5 using the P-Q-A strategy. Create a blank Statements or Claims Graphic Organizer.

4 Review and share: Once your students have finished, call on volunteers to read their newly written P-Q-A answers aloud (making sure they read exactly what they have written).

5 What to look for: Since the question stems are similar for the entire class, the P-Q-A answers will probably have a degree of similarity as well. Don't be alarmed about trending towards "formulaic writing." A writer's "voice" best evolves after they have locked down the fundamentals of the craft and we'll offer plenty of opportunities to enhance richness in subsequent lessons.

>> Next steps: Reflect on your class's ability to work in silence as well as use the P-Q-A strategy to successfully compose a one-sentence claim. Reflect on whether your students can answer the question that has been asked in a single, well written complete single sentence. For many young writers, the consistently proper execution of this skill will represent immense writing progress.



Short, Short,

BIG

Short Reads.

Short Writes.

BIG Gains!

Student Worktext



Dr. Katie McKnight & Alan Stומר

Claim it. Cite it. Cement it.

SAMPLE

SHORT, BIG LLC

SA

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WHAT IS A CLAIM?

CLAIM IT! → Says what you know

A claim is when someone says, “this is true”—it’s when a person puts forth an idea that something is an actual fact.

Claims vs. Statements

But hold on, because a claim is NOT a statement of fact; a claim is when someone says that something is a fact—and there is a HUGE difference between the two.

THIS IS A CLAIM	This is NOT a claim
Pepperoni pizza is delicious.	Pepperoni pizza is a type of food.
The author of the story probably spent a lot of time around young kids.	The author wrote a story about young kids.
Checkers is a fun and easy board game.	Checkers is a board game.

Claims put forth a statement that can be argued and debated!

- Saying, “Football is better than baseball,” is a claim.
- Saying, “Football is a sport,” is NOT a claim. (It’s a simple statement that can’t be debated.)

THIS IS A CLAIM	This is NOT a claim
Sneakers are more comfortable than boots.	Sneakers are worn by people on their feet.
The waitress cares about her customers.	The waitress serves her customers food.
Motorcycles were a terrible invention.	Motorcycles are a form of transportation.

Remember, not every statement is a claim.



IDENTIFYING CLAIMS

Determine whether each sentence below is a claim or a statement.

1. Vegetarians don't eat meat.

Claim Statement

2. Movies are more entertaining than YouTube videos.

Claim Statement

3. Beach vacations are more fun for kids than mountain vacations.

Claim Statement

4. The school principal is in charge of the campus.

Claim Statement

5. Nike makes comfortable running shoes.

Claim Statement

6. Dogs are better pets than cats.

Claim Statement

7. Dogs and cats are both pets.

Claim Statement

8. Spending too much time on a computer can make you tired.

Claim Statement

9. Cereal is the best breakfast to eat if you want to start your day right.

Claim Statement

10. Goldfish live in water.

Claim Statement



TIPS

Is it a statement or a claim? Here are some tips!

CLAIMS	This is NOT a claim
A CLAIM is a sentence that states an OPINION.	A STATEMENT is a sentence that states a FACT.
People disagree with CLAIMS all the time.	A STATEMENT can be proven true.
<p>Tip: If the sentence includes these phrases, it's probably a CLAIM:</p> <p><i>I believe...</i> <i>I think...</i> <i>In my opinion...</i> <i>Someone should...</i> <i>The best thing...</i> <i>The worst thing...</i> <i>I prefer...</i> <i>...is better than...</i></p>	<p>You can't argue about a STATEMENT. (Well, you can but the argument would be about debating whether the facts were actually correct and accurate.)</p>

Write or illustrate a personal tip to help you remember the difference between a CLAIM and a STATEMENT.



GRIZZLIES: THE COOLEST BEARS

In my opinion, grizzly bears are the coolest animal. They are large. An adult male can weigh 1,000 pounds. Their front claws can be over 4-inches long. Their color ranges from light brown to dark brown. Many have white tips on their fur. This “grizzled” look gives them their name.

The grizzly bear leads a solitary life. Except for mothers and their cubs, they usually live by themselves. This is probably very lonely for the bear.

We should all work to make sure grizzly bears can live safely with humans. They used to live all over the western United States. Then hunters killed a lot of them. Now they are protected under the Endangered Species Act.





STATEMENTS OR CLAIMS GRAPHIC ORGANIZER

Read the article **GRIZZLIES: THE COOLEST BEARS**.

- Copy 2 statement sentences into the Statements column.
- Copy 2 claim sentences into the Claims column.

STATEMENTS

Identify 2 Statement sentences from the Grizzlies article.

1. _____

2. _____

CLAIMS

Identify 2 Claim sentences from the Grizzlies article.

1. _____

2. _____



MAKE 5 CLAIMS

Question 1: How much television should students in your class be allowed to watch each day?

Question 2: What is the ugliest animal in nature?

Question 3: How much candy should you be allowed to eat each day?

Question 4: How many baths or showers should you have to take each week?

Question 5: Should parents ever serve their children ice cream for breakfast?



Put the Question in the Answer

P-Q-A stands for “Put the Question in the Answer.” It’s a surefire way of making sure your claim can be clearly understood without a reader having to know what question you’re answering.

Why is P-Q-A so important? Well, imagine you read this:

Chocolate sauce, whipped cream, and sprinkles.

As a reader, you would have no idea what the writer was talking about.

However, if you read this, you would understand:

Three popular toppings that kids like to put on ice cream are chocolate sauce, whipped cream and sprinkles.

Makes sense, right? Take a look at the 3 examples below:



Question: **What are three popular toppings kids like to put on ice cream?**

Incorrectly stated claim: *Chocolate sauce, whipped cream and sprinkles.*

Correctly stated claim: *Three popular toppings that kids like to put on ice cream are chocolate sauce, whipped cream and sprinkles.*

Question: **What is your favorite color?**

Incorrectly stated claim: *Blue.*

Correctly stated claim: *My favorite color is blue.*

Question: **What is your least favorite vegetable to eat?**

Incorrectly stated claim: *Broccoli.*

Correctly stated claim: *My least favorite vegetable to eat is broccoli.*

Using P-Q-A is a must for success. And using the words from the question in your answer is not cheating; it’s what strong writers do! Why? The two most important reasons are because:

1. By restating the question in the answer, a writer provides context for the reader. (And this is VERY important.)
2. It helps limit your claim to only one strong sentence. And that’s what we want right now (one strong sentence).



RE-WRITE YOUR 5 CLAIMS

Question 1: How much television should students in your class be allowed to watch each day?

Check your work. Did you use P-Q-A? Did you write one complete sentence?

Question 2: What is the ugliest animal in nature?

Check your work. Did you use P-Q-A? Did you write one complete sentence?

Question 3: How much candy should you be allowed to eat each day?

Check your work. Did you use P-Q-A? Did you write one complete sentence?

Question 4: How many baths or showers should you have to take each week?

Check your work. Did you use P-Q-A? Did you write one complete sentence?

Question 5: Should parents ever serve their children ice cream for breakfast?

Check your work. Did you use P-Q-A? Did you write one complete sentence?



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